POINT THREE

The monthly magazine of Toc H

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November 1972

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Toc H members accept a four-fold commitment:

1 To build friendships across the barriers that divide man from man

2 To give personal service

3 To find their own convictions while always being willing to listen to the views of others

4 To work for the building of that better world which has been called the Kingdom of God.

This magazine, which acts as a forum for ideas about Toc H and about the world in which we live, takes its title from the third of these Four Points–to think fairly.

On the cover:

Remember, remember the fifth of November. This large, life-like Guy Fawkes was made by the boys of the Coney Hall Shaftesbury School in Kent last year. Hayes branch and West Wickham Round Table combined to arrange a firework display for the boys.
Photo: Kentish Times

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VIEWPOINT

Subject for discussion

The field of education is full of controversial issues but whatever our point of view on these we would all, I think, agree that education has a fundamental part to play in the building of a better world, to which we in Toc H are committed. We ought, therefore, to be prepared to study these issues and we could well start with a short booklet, called *Recipe for Failure**, by the widely respected Chief Education Officer for the West Riding of Yorkshire, Sir Alec Clegg. These 76 wise and compassionate pages would provide an excellent basis for a series of branch discussions.

The basic theme of Sir Alec's book is the need for the 'positive discrimination' in favour of the disadvantaged which the Plowden Committee recommended. In his final paragraph he writes of the danger that in our developing meritocracy we may 'widen the gulf between the seed grown in favourable circumstances, from which we expect and get much, and the seed grown in unfavourable circumstances, from which we expect and get little. If we go on doing as we are doing, devoting all our concern to the best seed and making no attempt to improve the conditions in which the poor seed is sown, we can expect social trouble which may well take the form of guerrilla tactics designed by the rejected groups to disrupt the existence of those who have rejected them.' That is the 'recipe for failure' of which his title speaks.

The book discusses in turn the inequalities between children, the inequalities between different parts of the country, the inequalities resulting from social class and the inequalities between schools. In this last discussion he does not join in the battle between the 'progressives' and the 'traditionalists' over teaching methods. It is, he believes, attitudes rather than methods which distinguish the good schools from the bad.

The characteristics of a bad formal school are crisply summarised. 'Authority is maintained by force and fear. The gifted child is encouraged and the teachers take full credit for his success. He who, because of his superior gifts, stands least in need of a pat on the back is the first to get it. The slow weakling child who presents the greatest challenge to the teacher is disregarded, or at worst held in contempt. In the same way the child who most needs to learn to exercise responsibility is the last one to be charged with it . . . The teachers rarely see their task as one of learning and exploring with their children. Their task is to fill a vessel, not to kindle a fire.'

'It should not be thought,' he goes on, 'that the newer ways have not their shortcomings also . . . There may be far too much sentimentality about children, too much noise, too much poor, unfinished work, a lack of purpose, poor standards of achievement, and a readiness to make use of every latest pedagogical gimmick.'

In contrast, the mark of a first-rate school, whether its teaching methods are formal or informal, is 'the courtesy and respect which exists between head, staff and pupils. In such schools there is security and concern for all, no child is written off, the motive force is interest, the work of all is of a high standard and is well presented, there is little fear and authority is unobtrusive.'

Considerable space is devoted to the increasing problem of violence in schools. The causes are complex and there is no one answer. Sir Alec, in particular, calls for much closer co-operation between the educational and social work services. At the same time he stresses from experience the ability of the best schools to reduce delinquency. And, he adds, 'the basic problems of educating the less academically minded child are to provide a realistic curriculum which points to a work situation, more involvement of pupils in planning their own courses and a school situation which does not deny to the slow learners their measure of self respect.'

There is no doubt of the importance of the subjects with which this short book deals. I hope enough has been said here to encourage some branches to get a copy of it and to use it as the basis for a series of discussions with local 'experts' of varying shades of opinion.

K P-B

**Recipe for Failure* by Sir Alec Clegg. Published by the National Children's Home, 85 Highbury Park, London N5 1UD; and available from them at 45p.

The Sue Ryder Foundation

Charles Clark, 25-year-old Central Councillor from East Sussex, has left his £30 a week job as painter and decorator to work for a year for the Sue Ryder Foundation. As a voluntary tradesman he will receive £3 a week pocket money. Here are his first impressions of the Foundation.

By the time you read this I shall be somewhere in the heart of Poland, helping to build a new home for the sick and disabled and for the survivors of concentration camps in this country which suffered so much at the hands of the Nazis. Sue Ryder, who has already established 25 homes in Poland, has plans to build new ones and to extend others.

In my humble capacity of painter and decorator I am a member of a team of voluntary tradesmen who will erect the new home with the help of local labour. The team consists of skilled bricklayers, carpenters, plumbers, electricians and decorators. The homes are of a Canadian style timber-framed construction, prefabricated in panels, with a 4½" brick outer-skin constructed on site. The walls are lined internally with ½" plasterboard and with 2" mineral wool or fibreglass insulation, which gives a 'U' value for the walls of 008–considerably better than one would expect in equivalent buildings in Britain. This attention to detail is important because of the severe Polish winters.

For the few weeks before leaving for Poland I was living at the Foundation's headquarters at Cavendish, a 400-year-old building off the main road in this charming little West Suffolk village. One could hardly imagine a more peaceful and relaxing setting for these survivors of war-time horrors.

But behind the apparent air of tranquillity there is a tremendous amount of work going on. The general office is the nerve centre of the Sue Ryder Foundation. Full-time and part-time secretaries deal ceaselessly with the many and varied activities of the Foundation. There is, for instance, the running of the 50 or so Sue Ryder Remembrance shops scattered throughout Britain–a vital source of the Foundation's finances. For my own part there was much to do. The home has to be constantly maintained and decorations are kept up to the highest standards. Also once a week the staff all take their turn at evening phone duty for about three hours, and if one should have any spare time an extra pair of hands can always be used in the kitchen!

Left: Members of a Toc H project party at work in the garden of Stagenhoe Park, a Sue Ryder Home near Hitchin, Herts, this summer. The volunteers, most of whom were aged 15 or 16, removed two sections of glass from the roof of this greenhouse, replacing them with cellophane. They also erected a new greenhouse. During the week the volunteers were entertained by Hitchin and Biggleswade branches.
Photo: Herts and Beds Express

Sue Ryder carries a great burden of the work herself. I have had the pleasure of talking and consulting with her. What can one say about this incredible woman? The wife of Group Captain Cheshire and the mother of Jeremy and Elizabeth, she combines her family duties and work for the Foundation amazingly well. Many have tried with debatable success to describe and analyse her life but I would not presume to do so. But this I can say, and with some conviction–while in her presence one senses the tremendous and selfless dedication and urgency she puts into her life's work. She has achieved so much. Sue Ryder wants no admiration and rejects praise, but her help to the peoples of Eastern Europe speaks for itself.

Obituary

We regret to announce the death, in September, of James S McClure, who initiated and was the moving spirit behind the radio and television service to hospitals in Dundee. The continuation of the service will be a fitting memorial to a remarkable man. Also of Charles Williams (Soughall branch), who served on several occasions as ADC to the Founder Padre and accompanied him to the United States in 1966.

And of the following members:

In June: Edward Wilkinson (Dalton-in-Furness).

In July: Joseph H B Heath (South Western Area), Annie M Hitchon (Cardiff).

In August: Wilfred Andrew (Scunthorpe), Sarah F Boam (Scunthorpe), Col D Christopher Coates (Henstridge), Una M Downham (Saffron Walden), Beatrice M Dyble (Dawlish with Teignmouth), Sydney Harding (Green-Street-Green), Fanny Hopkins (Cardiff), Letitia H Howard (Wyke Regis), John W Jackson (Ashby-de-la-Zouch), James L Jones (Ashby-de-la-Zouch), The Rev Edward J Leeke (Saffron Walden), Florence Smith (Redcar), Mary E Venner (Bexhill-on-Sea).

In September: Florence M Addison (Headingley), G Brian Beeney (Norwich), Thomas G Blackman (Bognor Regis), Ruth Carter (Hartley Wintney), M Alan Condell (Camberwell & Dulwich), A Horace Fitter (Sandwell), Stanley E Foster (Harpenden), Queenie M Hooker (Southill), William Houston (Prestwick), Esther A Jennings (Wyke Regis), W Frank Jones (Sussex Area), Ewart Lester (Hurst Hill), John C Lower (Sussex Area), Leonard North (Cleethorpes & Grimsby), Bernard E E Patient (Fulham), Wing Comdr George Prigmore (a former general members' secretary), Ernest Spencer-Smith (Ashford), Gertrude E Squires (Okehampton), Eric Williams (Mold), Leslie R Willimott (Sheringham).

We give thanks for their lives.

Wind of change in South Africa

History was made at this year's meeting of the Council of Toc H South Africa, held in Bloemfontein. For the first time black delegates attended the meeting. We are glad of the opportunity to reprint the address to the Council by Alf Coates, the President of Toc H South Africa.

Alf Coates (right), President of Toc H South Africa, taking part in a weekend project at Etembeni earlier this year.

At my first South African Council meeting on my return to South Africa from overseas, I had a few words to say on the necessity of all of us, as individuals, and Toc H as a Movement, facing change. There is only one thing *constant* today, and that is *change*. You will remember that a few years ago Harold Macmillan, then Prime Minister of Great Britain, addressed the South African Parliament and spoke of the 'wind of change' blowing through the African Continent. I believe that we are all now experiencing that 'wind of change' and we have two choices. The one is to refuse to accept it and to endeavour to withstand it and if we do this there is no doubt that we shall be buffeted around considerably. The other is to go with it, accept it, use it to bring about the better world which we all hope for in our better moments.

There is no doubt that we are in a dilemma. Only the very blind, or the very selfish, are content with the world as it is. Mass poverty, hunger and racial conflict cry out for solution. Man can fly through space, walk on the moon, calculate with computers, and transplant hearts. Yet seldom has he felt more trapped by processes he cannot control.

Is there no way out of this dilemma? Is man really so helpless in the midst of his man-made power? Is there nothing we can do? Those of us who believe in the principles of Toc H must believe that there is. It is based on living experience and not on theory. When these principles are lived out it will show a new society in the making and how you and I and people everywhere can shape this new society.

What kind of new society and world are we planning for? Let us give serious thought to the sort of world we want to see. We want to see a world where (a) everyone has work; (b) everyone has food and a home; (c) where a man's character matters more than his colour or social position; (d) where industry and commerce aims to answer the needs of humanity, and is not an endless battle for control, profit and wages; (e) where schools and universities have freedom without chaos, and discipline without dictatorship; (f) where no man, or woman, is exploited or dictated to, or pandered to; (g) where rich nations help and respect developing ones, and big nations do not bully small ones; (h) where both the extreme left and the extreme right face their own shortcomings, and take on together the shaping of this new and just society.

Is this an idle dream? It is not if you and I decide to make it come true. It will take revolutionary change in our thinking and living to make it come true. We have to be realistic and face the fact that many people don't want to change their thinking or to face a change in their living conditions. They want to keep things as they are, and they will fight to preserve the *status quo*, which is often just a Latin phrase for the mess we are in.

To expect a change in human nature may be an act of faith, but to expect a change in human society without it, is an act of lunacy. There are those who say that only violence brings change. This is not true. Violence changes nobody, and provokes only more violence.

Those of us who accept our Toc H way of life, and believe in the Four Points of the Compass, must advocate that we have got to try a new way, and place humanity and moral and spiritual values first. When people face sincerely the challenge of the Points of the Compass they will be different, and if people change, the structure of society will change. Both go together and both are necessary. The important thing is that we start in the right place, and that is with ourselves.

Most of us feel that the world would be fine if somebody else were different–the workers, the bosses, the teachers, parents or children, or the Russians, the Americans, the Chinese, the Blacks or the Whites. Ever since Adam blamed Eve for giving him that apple, men and women have blamed others for what goes wrong. That achieves nothing. If we want to be radicals, we shall accept for ourselves the changes we would like to see in others.

Men have always argued about the existence of God. Today some scientists say that recent discoveries reveal man as the supreme power and the master of his fate. Others say that each new discovery reveals more of the working of a supernatural being.

Many ordinary people believe there is a creative force other than man with all his limitations, which gives meaning to life and a sense of destiny to be fulfilled.

Experience has shown that through the centuries this Supreme Being is available to those who really want to know Him, and who has done remarkable things through those who try to find and follow His will. When we give our own stubborn selfwill to Him, His power can come in and change the most difficult human nature. It can answer our fears and longings and meet our deepest needs.

Down the ages men have talked to God, pouring out their hopes and prayers. Men have listened too, believing that He could and did speak to them. In our Toc H Constitution we have written indelibly that we should 'listen now and evermore to the voice of God'. How much time do we give to doing this?

We can listen at anytime, but a good time is first thing in the morning immediately on waking. St Francis de Sales used to say, 'Half an hour listening is essential except when you are extremely busy, then a full hour is needed'. Not every thought that comes in the time of quiet and listening is necessarily from God, but we are more likely to hear that Voice if we take time to listen than if we do not. To make sure that the thoughts we get are not our own selfish wishes, they can be tested and sifted by the moral challenge of the Four Points of the Compass.

If we believe that Toc H is a reconciling force, and creates bridges between men, we should welcome this opportunity that we have in Southern Africa, to put into practice and show the world this new idea that is adequate for the age in which we live.

Race is a fact of life. We are born white, yellow, brown or black. (I was born white.) We cannot help being what we are born, and should be proud of our race. We cannot help where we come from, but we can do a lot to determine where we are going. Every one of us here can help to show that different races can live and work together within a nation, beyond the difference of colour, creed and language. Hatred does more harm to the hater than to the hated, for it makes a man ineffective in dealing with the cause of his hate. But hatred can be cured if one loves widely, and we decide to deal with the causes in our own lives that promote resentment and hatred in others. We can all be part of the cure and don't have to wait until we are perfect. If we did we would wait for ever. We can all start by tackling the problems around us and working out the answer right where we are.

Let me ask all of you a question. Why have you all forgathered here in Bloemfontein this weekend? Have you all come here just because your Provinces or Areas sent you? Have you come because it flatters your ego to have been selected to represent your Areas?

I would suggest that it is none of these things and that we are all here because we believe in this Toc H Movement and the way of life that it advocates. If we are honest, most of us will admit that we have failed to live the high moral code which Toc H advocates, and have perhaps not spent enough time listening to that 'inner voice'.

Looking back over the past year I will admit there has been some small evidence of change, but not enough. As I look around I see some evidence of change amongst you delegates. For the first time we see faces of a different colour at our Conference. This is a welcome change. Let us hope that in the years to come our Annual Conferences will be more colourful and stimulating.

There are many projects and schemes and signs of life in the Movement throughout the country. Let us all resolve to put our shoulders to the wheel and accelerate these movements. If we ¶leave Bloemfontein this weekend, and have not had our thinking stimulated, some of our ideas changed, and we don't have a new determination to commit ourselves even more completely to this Movement, then we will not have faced the challenge of change, or accepted the full implications of the Toc H way of life.

Letters

The £2 million

A very modest outlay of some of our new riches could benefit almost every member, used as follows.

Everyone knows of Dor Knap in the Cotswolds; a large number (including several Cromer members) know the place intimately, from spending weeks or weekends there. On these occasions the hospitality and family spirit were wonderful, but the beds, the chairs, the ablutions—oh dear! Comfort was scarce, albeit no-one minded. After all, most of our meeting places are cast in similar mould, so it was no great hardship to endure more.

But now that we have the means, why not start the ball rolling by using some of them on ourselves? We think we deserve a little consideration for the long and faithful service rendered to the Movement.

Another thing—so many of us are over 21, long past those glorious times when pioneer conditions were terrific fun, and Dor Knap's beds get ever harder to older bones. We feel that the old image of Toc H roughing it under Spartan conditions in loft, barn, outhouse (and Dor Knap) has persisted far too long.

Jack Twiss *Cromer*

Lucky us, we as a charity have money to invest that will bring us in sufficient interest to pay our debts and overdrafts and leave enough for a very exciting expansion programme. Small branches will be able to spend a little of the money normally sent to the Family Purse to brighten up their branch rooms or their image in the locality. Larger branches will be able to commit themselves to much larger and more challenging schemes where finance has always been a stumbling-block. We as a section of the grass roots say, 'Don't pump money into overseas aid but inject some into developing the Movement at home, thereby increasing the fellowship and service in our own back yard'.

Bernard J Maull
Martock, Somerset

Jock Brown at Warden Manor

I read with great interest about Jock Brown of Gibraltar in the August issue and wished I could meet such a character. He sounded so wonderful but I consoled myself that one cannot meet all the splendid folk in the world.

Well, I had booked my holiday at Warden Manor. We had a wonderful time with the usual competitions, putting, table tennis, bowls and darts, and a wonderful pageant, ably produced by John Cole. The renewing of old friendships and making of new ones was in the tradition of the house; the tales of old so well told by Vic Martin, the warden of the house for so many years; the pilgrimage to Canterbury; tea on the lawn; bathing down at Warden Bay; walks in the countryside and all the things that make a holiday at Warden Manor go so quickly.

Now to the whole point of this letter. On the Wednesday John Cole said, 'We are having a visitor'. And lo and behold there was Jock Brown, so after all I did not have to visit Gibraltar to meet him. We knew Chris Gent had been right when he wrote in his article, 'You'll be meeting a marvellous man–and Toc H service incarnate'. He told us some marvellous tales and it was nearly 1.30 am when we retired at last to our beds.

Freda Hurt *Mansfield*

Exhibiting success

Local Toc H branches joined in Watford's Golden Jubilee celebrations when they had a stand in the 'Leisure is Pleasure' Exhibition at the Town Hall.

With no spare cash in the kitty, an absence of local material to exhibit and very limited available manpower, it was with some trepidation but an abundance of faith that the venture was undertaken. We were extremely grateful for the valuable help received from Huw Gibbs, who not only came and discussed the project with representatives from the two branches and sowed some imaginative ideas, but came over to help put those ideas into practice, enlisting the help of John Burgess and some of his Projects Team to man the stand during the afternoons when our own members were at work.

Using the theme that 'helping others brings pleasure to leisure', the Marley-Haley exhibition supplemented by local posters, a home-made mobile and an abundance of free literature from HQ brought a considerable amount of interest from the many visitors who attended.

Whilst it is still early days to assess results, a number of new contacts and offers of help were made but it would still have been well worth the effort if only from the point of view of making us rethink what Toc H is all about and talk about it to others.

Betty Hawkins *Watford, Herts*

Fifty Years On

I was extremely interested to read, under the above heading, of the activities of the Sleaford, Lincs, branch. Their report of their activities in helping to man the Toc H stockmen's tent at the Lincolnshire Show took me back to the same Lincolnshire Show some 50 years ago. In 1921 I joined the Secretary of the Church of England Temperance Society and Police Court Mission in Lincoln as office boy. The following year the Church of England Temperance Society was responsible for starting the Social Centre Tent at the Lincolnshire Agricultural Show for the purpose of providing refreshment and entertainment to the workers on the show ground. This was much appreciated by the stockmen themselves and supported by the farmers and exhibitors as a means of keeping their workers on the show ground in the evenings instead of their wandering off to public houses.

I believe there is no longer a branch of the Church of England Temperance Society in Lincoln, but it is good to know the stockmen and workers are still being catered for. Television is, I see, one of the entertainments now provided–in the 1920s we had to rely on Concert Parties for this purpose.

I have vivid recollections of sleeping alone in a large marquee on a wooden platform with a bag of oatmeal (used in preparing a temperance drink provided free) for a pillow, and being woken up in the middle of the night by stallions which had broken loose from their horse boxes and were charging around the showground, chased by stockmen.

J Clifford Cooper *Worcester*

TALKING POINT

Faith is our full confidence

Bob Knight

Among the invitations to buy Christmas cards that circulate every year around this time is one from a group of people whose faith and courage is an inspiration: the Mouth and Foot Painting Artists. One of them, Elizabeth Twistington-Higgins, designed a card for Toc H. In the epilogue to her autobiography, she writes, 'I do not know why I was afflicted with total paralysis. I do not believe there is a purpose discoverable behind this happening, but I do believe that it is God's will that I should accept it with graciousness and equanimity, and do as much as I can with my life in spite of my disability. I accept it as a kind of challenge, a testing of my strength of faith and will.'[1]

Faith must be the most remarkable characteristic of which we are capable. It is 'putting our full confidence in the things we hope for'.[2] It is the determination of a legless pilot to learn to walk and even to fly a plane again; of a widow to live, not with a sense of all she has lost, but in a spirit of thanksgiving for all she has known through her marriage, and will always retain. It is the response we make to a social need, certain a better situation is possible, and determined to find the way of achieving it.

A remarkable feature of all situations like these is the claim that faith of this kind, at first sustained by those who show it, eventually sustains them. Imagine the huge water wheel that turns a mill—there is one to be seen still at Lower Slaughter near Dor Knap. From its stationary position it appears that a gigantic force will be required to move the wheel. When water first flows into each segment, the wheel moves very slowly. But as it revolves, more segments come into operation, more of the wheel comes under the force of the natural power in the river. The wheel revolves more easily, and more effectively. This same principle applies in the moral and spiritual realm, and in much the same way. By exercising faith, that is by putting our full confidence in the things we hope for, we find we are co-operating with a force that, until then, had been flowing past us.

We show faith like this when we respond to a particular person's invitation to help. 'I did it because old so-and-so asked me, and I couldn't refuse HIM.' This is a familiar reaction, and is the basis of friendship, of a relationship of a student to a good teacher, and of our membership of movements like Toc H. Being a Christian is another example of the same thing. It has been boiled down to the simple phrase, 'Jesus is Lord'.

In practice it may mean putting one's full confidence in the assertion that love is the most powerful force in our universe. That is what He said, and those were the terms on which He consistently lived. Compared with Him there is room for improvement in every one of us. Improvement does take place as we put more confidence in love and less in our alternatives. So we discover the effect of faith. Our faith in love, though tentative and very small, works, and in consequence our faith grows. The wheel begins to turn more readily and more effectively. The divine power of love which once flowed past, now flows through.

Faith in practice may mean a change in one's way of life. Toc H now needs a number of its own members who will make a response in faith, by joining the full-time staff. There are possibilities open to us now that have never been open before, and there are gaps left by resignations and retirement. Our financial resources are strong, but the link between them, the capabilities of the membership and the society we are called to transform by faith, is a human one. Full-time staff are an urgent need to complete that chain: people who have full confidence in the things we hope for.

1 *Still Life* E Twistington-Higgins

2 Hebrews XI verse I (J B Phillips' *Letters to Young Churches*)

For your convenience

'Ayr branch rooms hope to have the inside toilet for the beginning of the winter programme, which it is hoped will increase our scope.'

From Clyde Coast District Minutes

Fifty Years On

The World Chain of Light starts this year in Edinburgh and it is therefore appropriate that the final article in this series, contributed by Jack Morison, should tell the history of Edinburgh branch.

Flashback to December 1922. Toc H members board buses for the trip across London to All Hallows-by-the-Tower for the Festival service.

Our branch owes its inception to a visit paid by Tubby Clayton to the city in December 1921, when he met a number of those who had met with Toc H in Poperinge and wished to get the Movement going in Scotland. The branch was started during the next year, its first home being the Kirk of the Canongate, from which the World Chain of Light is being started this year. Some years later, however, the branch moved to the Candlemakers' Hall, a 17th-century building near the statue of 'Greyfriars Bobby', the celebrated dog who refused to leave his master's grave in the adjacent Greyfriars Churchyard. In 1932 the branch had to move as its quarters had been acquired by the Edinburgh Press Club. Other rooms were eventually found in the northern part of the city, but less than two years later the branch was once more 'on the street'. This proved a blessing in disguise, for the branch teamed up with the Dalry Boys' Club, who were also searching for somewhere to function, and through the kindness of some well-disposed friends, a small Limited Company was formed to lease Dalry House, a 17th-century building in one of the Western suburbs of Edinburgh. The house was officially opened on September 21 1934 by a senior member of the Edinburgh Town Council, and for about 22 years this was the branch's home.

Dalry House is interesting architecturally, being, until about 100 years ago, the manor house of the lands of Dalry (which is said to mean 'the King's field'), and a splendid specimen of the domestic residence of this period. Its builder and first tenant, Walter Chieslie, was a fervent Royalist and there is a beautifully decorated ceiling in one of the rooms to commemorate the Restoration of Charles II. The son of the builder achieved unenviable notoriety by murdering the Lord President of the Court of Session, for which crime he was hung in chains on one of the town gibbets, while yet another tenant–being hard up–tried to dispose of the house by raffling it (but without success!). In

1870, however, it was decided to feu out the Dalry Estate for building purposes, and in 1877 the house was bought by the Episcopalians, who built a normal practising school adjacent to it, and rather knocked the house about a bit to convert it into a hostel for female student teachers. It remained in this condition until about 1934 when, due to changes in the educational system, the training hostel part of the school was amalgamated with Moray House College, and that is when the opportunity occurred for the branch to get in.

When the last war started the members of Toc H thought it their duty to try to do some work amongst the Services personnel who were stationed in Edinburgh, but Dalry House was felt to be rather far from the centre of things, and so the first floor of a flat in Rutland Square was leased, this being adjacent to the West End and the Caledonian Railway (LNWR) terminus. A rest room, where light snacks could be obtained, was set up, which proved fairly popular, and at least one romance came out of No 13–not so unlucky after all.

The end of the war, as it brought changes to many people, brought changes, of course, to the branch, and, consequent upon demobilisation, etc, the Edinburgh branch suddenly found itself with a membership of about five–the members of the branch Executive! The question of whether or not the branch could afford to keep up the rooms in Rutland Square with the slender resources at its command became a sore point which was solved for a time by letting them to one of the Polish organisations, but in the end it was felt better to abandon the unequal struggle and the question of new rooms was once again an important item on the branch's agenda. As it was at that time impossible to get back to Dalry House, an old sandbag store in Riddles Court, Lawnmarket, was let to the branch and, after extensive cleaning operations, a move was made in 1946. Here fortunately our luck turned and we had a number of new members added to our roll, and, in 1950, to our great joy, we were at last permitted to get back to Dalry House, but alas! in 1963 another move was imminent, as the house had been acquired by the Edinburgh and Leith Old People's Welfare Council, for conversion into a Community Centre. So we 'folded our tents', and moved to 105 Hanover Street, and then, about two years later, to the Manse of the Canongate Kirk, and finally in 1968 to our present abode, 12 Newington Road (Top Flat), which is on one of the main roads to the south, and where we meet mostly on Wednesday nights, and are glad to welcome members from other branches.

To pass from branch movements to personalities and 'jobs'. The branch owed a lot in its early days to the Rev George F MacLeod (now Lord MacLeod of Fuinary), who took a great interest in the Edinburgh set up, and his example and work for the branch did a great deal to inspire many people. During this time the 'Fet-Lor' (Fettesian-Lorettonian) Boys' Club, sponsored by these two great public schools, was started, and I'm glad to say that it's still going strong–though not in its original clubrooms. Other names from this time are Melville Dinwiddie, Gwynne Newman, 'Nunky' Brown and Tom Curr.

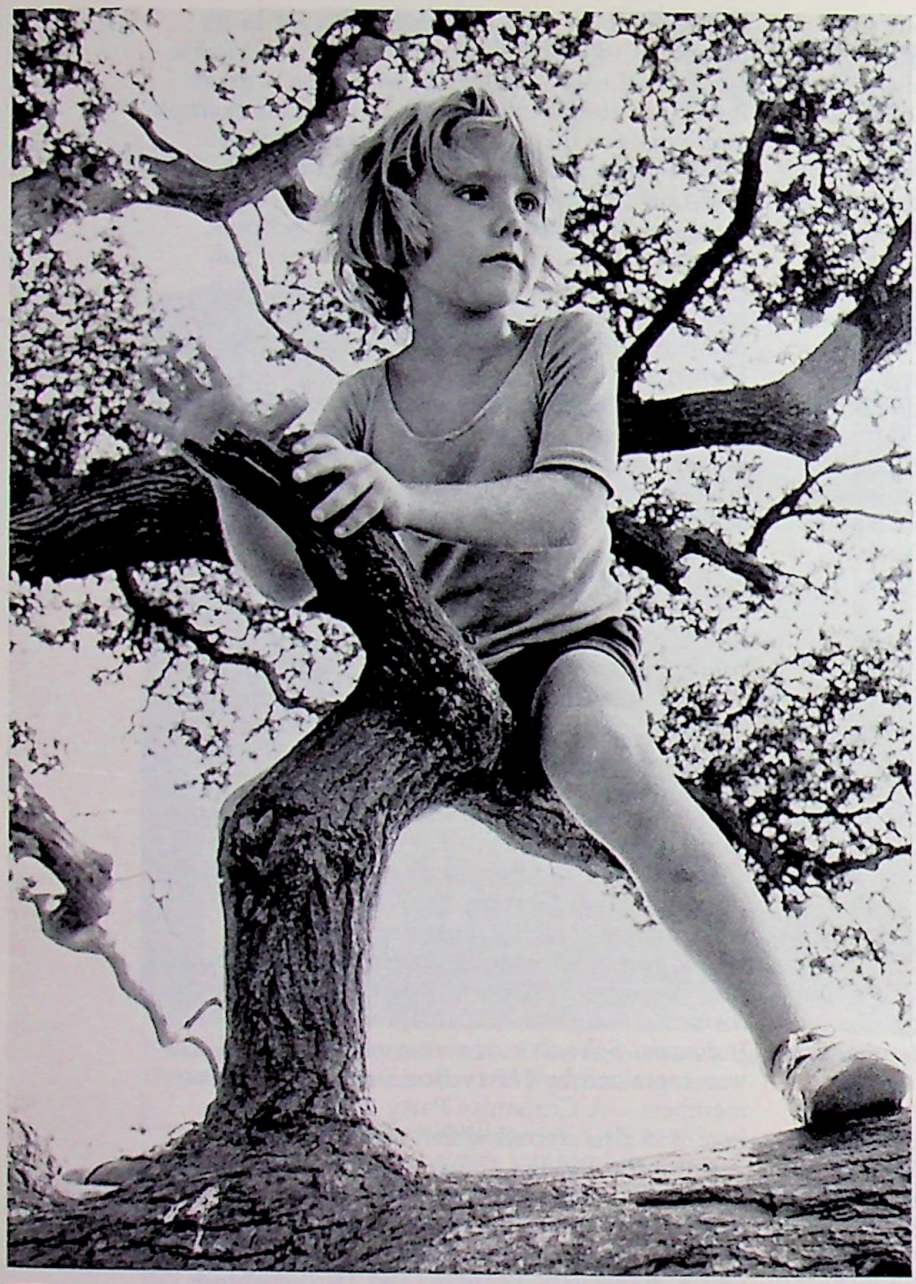
During the Dalry House period a good many activities went on there. Colonel 'Snowy' Fear was the warden. The report on the 1934 opening remarked that 'he was going to live among the boys, and be a brother to them'. Some years later he decided to go to Jersey to grow potatoes and was caught in the German occupation, survived this, and revisited the house after the war. Yet another name indissolubly linked with the house is Padre Ronnie Wright, who threw himself with great vigour into all the activities here, and had a room in the house as assistant warden. Padre Wright has been for many years Minister of the Canongate Church and is this year's Moderator of the Church of Scotland.

During the Riddles Court days the branch did some work for German POWs and at least two very successful dances were held. We visited the old people at Queensberry House in the Canongate. A Boys' Brigade Company was formed among the lads at 'Dr Guthrie's' Industrial School–now a remand home–and was captained by Harry Beveridge, one of our members. A Christmas Party for the youths here was also started which ran until recently.

From the Riddles Court days until now, we have done various jobs and had numerous experiences. Activities have included visiting old age pensioners and decorating their houses, wood chopping, gardening and also working one of the lifts at the Royal Infirmary during visiting times.

Bob Leslie, who has served on the Central Executive, joined the branch while we were at Riddles Court, and has been a tower of strength to us ever since, his extensive executive experience having stood us in good stead on many occasions. Norman Steel has been our treasurer since about that time, and–being in the financial line himself–has always been able to see that our money has been shepherded to the best advantage of the Family Purse.

In conclusion, it may be said that though the Edinburgh branch, like many others, has had its ups and downs, it has always met in the family spirit of Toc H.



PROJECTS '72

For many of those who took part in the poetry weekend at Alison House earlier this year the highlight was hearing 19-year-old Trudie Moore from North London read some of her own poems. For all who took part in children's playschemes this summer this poem will bring back memories.

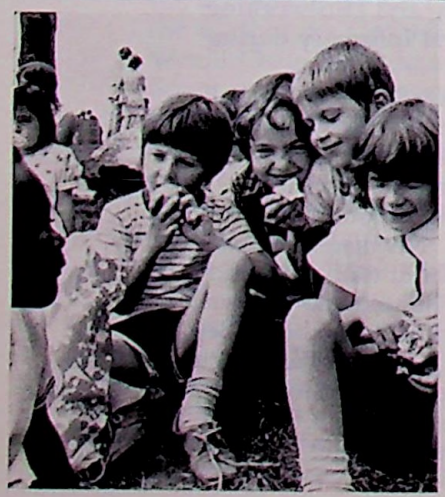
The Hexagon

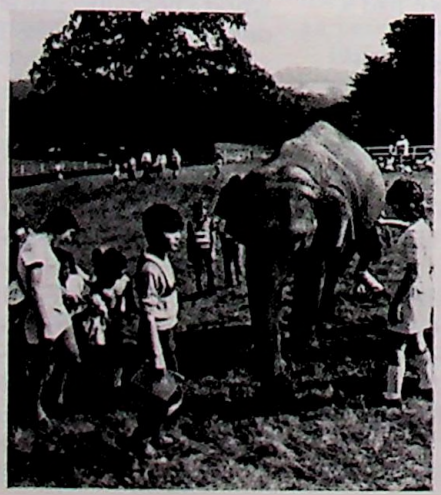
As he stands surrounded
by the hexagon
Tears trickle down his tired face
blurring the giant pillars
of brick and glass squares towering above him.

Lowering his head he studies his shoes
planted firmly on the hexagon–
his world.
The grey smoke passing over silent rooftops,
Tones with the murky shades
that swirl in his mind.
But he has one grain of fun
in the world of concrete.
His small hexagon and a pair of feet.

Trudie Moore

We print this month a further selection of photographs of this summer's projects.





Showing what can be done

Chris Spragg, secretary of Leigh branch in Lancashire, reports on one of the Northern Region projects, a playscheme in West Derby, Liverpool.

Ten volunteers, including two residents of Mark 24 in Liverpool, arrived at St Luke's Church, West Derby, in the heart of a large corporation housing estate on the outskirts of Liverpool. Their intention? To organise and run a two-week summer playscheme for 80 children between the ages of eight and 12.

The volunteers spent the weekend knocking on doors, announcing the scheme. Response to notices in the local schools had not been encouraging. No one was quite expecting what happened at 9 o'clock on the Monday morning. 120 children of all ages arrived at the gates, clamouring for places.

And the ten volunteers rose to their task with as much enthusiasm and humour as Liverpudlian kids can display. They were short of tools and equipment but the kids helped them improvise. Football, rounders, cricket, organised games and impromptu games were soon in full swing. Climbing frames, ropes, scooters and bikes were used to the full; some good creative work was achieved by groups who made music, painted and made puppets and dolls.

The area they served is well known to the Social Services Department, the probation and school welfare services and the police. Tough and unsettled, it has its full share of social problems. Few facilities exist for the large and increasing child population. The boredom of nothing to do can soon lead to gang trouble and vandalism. A playscheme such as this had been badly needed there for many years.

Vandals soon showed their faces. Youngsters were frightened, games were spoiled, windows were smashed. The police promised a regular check, and arrived one evening to find the girls fighting off a gang of lads, with mops through the window. The boys were caught and frightened off. Later in the week the girls attended a local dance, met some of the boys who had been causing trouble and—this is evidence of the spirit of the venture—some of these same troublemakers later came in every day to help organise activities for the younger children.

On the Thursday of the second week adults were invited to a parents' evening and served with hot dogs, soup and cake. The parents responded most favourably, and plans are already being laid for next year. The Rev Jeremy Allum of St Luke's, who has been pushing the idea of a playscheme, has a list of 15 parents willing to do something towards another scheme. If ideas for next year work out, the scheme will have achieved much. All that was needed was someone to start it off, to be the catalyst, to show what can be done. Next year the community will organise the scheme itself.

Top: The broom may be bigger than she is but, like all the children at the Surrey Camp at Henley Fort, near Guildford, she does her share of the chores.

Below: One of the most worthwhile of the Surrey projects is the 121 Holiday for physically handicapped and able-bodied teenagers. As usual much of the time was spent in the swimming pool. Photos: Rob Spencer

Opposite page: Slough was one of the Toc H Districts to sponsor a playscheme. A highlight was the visit to Windsor Safari Park where the children watched elephants perform, made full use of the playground and enjoyed a picnic on the grass. On any project supper is a time to relax, to talk, to argue, to assess the project and to set the world to rights. Photos: Maria Bartha

PROJECTS '72

The aim of the Manor Hospital, Epsom, Surrey, project was to give the children as much time as possible away from the institutional atmosphere of the hospital. They visited the seaside and Chessington Zoo, where the big dipper and train were very popular.

Photo: Rob Spencer

Photos: Cathy Nicholson

The number of Toc H children's camps seems to be increasing steadily. The faces in these photos are a clear indication of the value of these camps.

Right: Boys from Newcastle about to board the coach for a week's holiday at the Toc H holiday centre at Alnmouth, Northumberland. Photo: Newcastle Chronicle

Below: These London children enjoyed a fortnight by the sea at Exmouth as guests of East Devon District. Photo: Western Times

Welcome Point

The following new branches were recognised by the Central Executive at its September meeting: Glenrothes (j), Twydall (j).

The following branches elected new members during August and September:

8–Dundee (j).

6–Middlewood (j), Twydall (j).

4–Washington (j).

3–Bideford (w), Edgmond (j), Melrose (j), Syston (j), Washington (j).

2–Abertillery (j), Camborne (j), Paris (w), Seal (m).

1–Acton & Garden Village (m), Ashby-de-la-Zouch (m), Beckley (m), Bilston (j), Bristol Central (w), Codsall (m), Darlington Central (w), Downend (m), Durrington (w), Eastbourne (j), Gorleston & Great Yarmouth (m), Goxhill (m), Honiton (m), Horsell (m), Kings Norton & Northfield (w), Margate (m), Morecambe (w), Netherton (m), Northern Area (j), Old Coulsdon (m), Orston (j), Plympton (w), Rhyl North (m), St Annes on Sea (j), Strode Park & Herne (m), Whitstable (m).

We extend a warm welcome to the 76 new members.

INTERNATIONAL HARMONY AT POPERINGE'S HOP FEAST

Colin Campbell

Once again the town of Poperinge has demonstrated its deep desire for concord between those who were in conflict, and its capacity to generate friendship even among those whose memories still cling to the sufferings and bitterness of war. It is the proud privilege of Toc H to be closely associated with the process of creating harmony where once was nothing but horror.

Every year Toc H sends a delegation to the annual meeting of the Talbot House Association which, under Belgian law, is the holding body for the Old House. Every three years the town holds its International Hoppesfeesten. By synchronising these two events Toc H leaders take their place alongside the leaders of the visiting delegations from Germany, Czechoslovakia and of Poperinge itself. This year the Toc H representation was strengthened by a party led by 'Skegg' Blanchard and by the presence of two South African members. For obvious reasons which all regret, the delegation from Zatec in Czechoslovakia was unable to come this time but the one from Wolnzach in Bavaria was greatly strengthened by the presence of the Provincial Governor, the Landrat of Pfaffenhoven.

At 8 pm on the Friday evening, Germans, Belgians and British stood together at the Menin Gate of Ieper for the Last Post, a moving moment made all the more thrilling for Tubby himself by the presence of the Canadian Defence Attaché and the laying of a Canadian wreath in the presence of some who had once served there.

At the civic reception in the Stadhuis, Burgomaster Sansen and members of the Town Council, all proven friends of Toc H, welcomed their guests and exchanged commemorative gifts. The various Burgomasters, the Landrat and Jack Trefusis, President of Talbot House Association, all spoke of the significance of such a gathering, Jack speaking in both Flemish and German.

Members of the delegation from Wolnzach, Bavaria, at the garden party at the Old House. Photo: Colin Campbell

On Saturday afternoon Talbot House played host at a garden party attended by well over 200 people, including the British Ambassador, the Military Attaché and their ladies. The Band of St Stanislas College provided the music and a bevy of lovely young ladies dispensed tea and English cake with charming efficiency, under the direction of Greta Penness, International Secretary, and those splendid allies, Rolande Blanckaert and Mevrouw De Sagher (now a Toc H member in her own right and Chairman of the Belgian Friends of Talbot House), whose husband did so much for Toc H as Burgomaster.

The festivities in the gigantic marquee in the Oudstrijdersplein on Saturday evening further liquidated any lingering differences and two bands, including the Alpenjagerkapelle from Wolnzach, ensured that language problems were immaterial. When it was discovered that the Director of Toc H was celebrating his birthday a remarkable Bavarian rendering of Scottish airs was followed by a still more remarkable ovation with the whole assembly shaking the canvas with 'Happy Birthday, dear Sandy!' and shouts of 'Prosit' to suitable accompanying gestures.

On Sunday an International Mass in St John's Church, at which the Landrat and Jack Trefusis each read a short passage, in the presence of a full congregation and marked by superb music and singing, brought home the deep significance of what was happening.

There can be no doubt of the place of Toc H in Poperinge. It is no longer just Talbot House as a place of pilgrimage, reverenced as the birthplace of a Movement and visited as tourist attraction, nor is it just a symbol of the still potent Anglo-Belgian friendship. That Poperinge itself values the Old House is shown by its special grant of BF100,000 towards the cost of recent repair and re-decoration and the doubling of its annual grant to BF10,000. But the real value lies in the close personal ties between people of all generations that have developed.

Attempts to describe Toc H tend to become clichés. One such has become a reality in Poperinge. Toc H exists to reconcile man to God and man to man.

RE-BIRTH IN SCOTLAND

The following article, which is reproduced in full, was cut from the *Sunday Post* and forwarded to us by Albert Debenham, treasurer of Colchester, Essex, branch.

More years ago than I care to recall, I handed a bouquet to Alloa Toc H.

They ran a bus to Bridge of Earn hospital in the days when there weren't so many cars about. It meant friends and relatives of patients there found visiting so much easier.

Since then, alas, the branch has fallen on sadder days. Some stalwart members have died. Others left the district. Jobs became fewer and steadily the numbers dropped. And a week or two ago the day came when, sadly, the few remaining members met to decide whether it might just be better to disband. And who could blame them?

Then something very like a miracle happened. Before the meeting closed that little group of men had made up their minds not to disband—but instead, to raise no less than £1,000! They will use it to buy a mini-bus for hospital visiting, outings for old people and handicapped children, ferrying concert parties to hospitals and homes, and every kind of good work you can think of.

Already a club that was dying on its feet has been imbued with new life. All kinds of schemes are being dreamed up to raise more cash. Members, thrilled by the challenge before them, are finding the work more rewarding than ever—and, best of all, their enthusiasm is attracting new helpers to the cause.

So what was planned as a funeral turned out instead to be a re-birth—and I'm delighted to tell you about it.

Alan Tutt, chairman of the residents' welfare committee of Greathouse Cheshire Home in Wiltshire, flanked by Haydn Erasmus (right), chairman of the Treorchy Male Voice Choir, and 'Donna' Griffiths (left), secretary of the choir, after the presentation of a plaque to be hung on the door of the newly furnished Ystafell Côr Meibion Treorci (or Treorchy Male Choir Room). This new day room was decorated and furnished with the proceeds of the concert given by the choir in Chippenham last year, and is a tangible expression of the friendship between the choir and Greathouse Cheshire Home, which started when residents of the Home attended choir rehearsals during outings to Wales arranged by Chippenham branch. Another concert will be given on September 29 next year.
Photo: Reg Coates

Mark 4 fete

A Manchester District fete held in the garden of Mark 4. Trying her luck at the tombola is Mrs 'Jeannie' McNielly, a member of the Mark staff, watched by District chairman Arthur Howard, who was in charge of the bottle stall. The photographer is Ian Goldthorpe, hon warden of the Mark.

Come again

'I went to the doctor the other day. He said "Hello, I haven't seen you for a long time". I said "No. I've been ill".'

From Lincolnshire Area Newsletter

Broadcasters' busy day

Carnival Day was the busiest day ever for the Weymouth, Dorset, hospital broadcasting unit. The team were on the air from 7.55 in the morning to 10 at night, with commentaries on all the day's main events as well as a wide selection of music. A long day for all the members of the small team, but especially for Pete Foster, who doubled the roles of announcer and producer throughout the 14 hours. Hospital Radio Weymouth is sponsored jointly by Toc H and the Hospital League of Friends. Members of Toc H visited the hospitals covered by the station during the day to check on reception.

Thanks from the Lebanon

The East Devon lunch club for people from overseas has recently received a well-deserved tribute. Writing from Beirut, Lebanon, Mary Simonian says: 'I always looked forward for the Thursdays to come and be among friends who had devoted their time and themselves to make us feel at home in a strange country. May God bless every one of you and give you the health so that you can continue your invaluable task of helping people.' Former Western Regional staff member Alice Welford says that she hopes this may encourage other branches and Districts to try a similar overseas lunch club.

WHILE GOD AND THE FOUNDER PADRE SLEPT...

Chris Gent

The police found an open door at No 41 Trinity Square again the other night. I always know when it's the police–Chippie's bark assumes an unusually hysterical tone; and not even Tubby knocks on my door at 2.00 am; 4.00 am, perhaps, but not 2.00 am.

Anyhow, they're very nice and thorough about the investigation. Who am I? What am I? What is an Aide de Camp? If I'm not a *real* Aide de Camp, why am I called an Aide de Camp etc, etc? Things went much more smoothly this time. Last time they found drops of blood on the landing–either Fred Tuckett's nose, or else Tubby had been shaving again. They still didn't believe me, though, when I told them that there was an elderly clergyman living on the floor above. They just *have* to go and look. After that, they believe anything I tell them.

Then follows a guided tour of No 41, and No 42, although there's a problem about the latter, because it's in a different 'patch' than No 41. I may be wrong, but I think they called in another squad which *does* have No 42 in their patch. Anyhow, we ended up on the pavement outside with a good dozen police *and* a police dog. And then the CID arrived, which brought the numbers up around the 15 mark. The beat policemen dutifully reported their findings to the CID. Including the fact about the 'elderly clergyman on the top floor.'

To which the CID reply: 'That's no elderly clergyman–that's Tubby Clayton!'

The theological implications are staggering!

memorial gift

At an informal gathering in the Netherton, Worcs, branch rooms the life and service of the late Mary Taylor was remembered by the gift of a ripple bed and a commode chair which were received on behalf of the Dudley Welfare Services by Miss Lawton and Miss le Manquais. Money for these gifts was subscribed by members of local branches and other friends of Mary's, it being felt that a practical gift aptly summed up the life and work of Mary, not only in Toc H but in the community where her life had been spent.

Handicapped boys' camp in Wales

Frank Morris, *press officer, Mold branch*

Mold branch, in North Wales, decided this year to replace its usual boys' camp, held at the branch headquarters, Cathrina House, by a holiday for physically handicapped boys. And permission was obtained to hold the camp in a local school, because of the greater facilities available. Other organisations in the town were invited to help, and joint camp meetings were held at frequent intervals.

Mrs Peth Davidson, of the Northern Regional staff, arranged for the boys, all of whom attend the same day centre in Liverpool, to spend a fortnight in Mold. There were trips to the coast and into the countryside, to the river (and the zoo) at Chester and to Llangollen. Acton & Garden Village branch arranged a visit to the Leggo toy factory outside Wrexham and they returned with quite a few samples. But perhaps the outing the boys enjoyed most was the one to a farm at Nerquis, just outside Mold, arranged by the Mold women's branch, where they had a whale of a time.

Real homes for mentally handicapped

The Government White Paper *Better Services for the Mentally Handicapped* stresses the need for residential care for the mentally handicapped to be in homely surroundings rather than in large institutions. A newly published booklet, called *Room for Improvement*, suggests some of the ways in which this might be achieved and points out how ordinary homelike surroundings can help the mentally handicapped to learn how to do the ordinary things of everyday life. 'A domestic and informal living unit,' say the authors, 'will not only be better to live in; it will abound in a variety of tasks of different levels of complexity which will provide natural training and learning opportunities . . . (The mentally handicapped person) needs a chance to practise normal patterns of behaviour. This will not only build up his self-respect, but will help him to become a more acceptable person.' *Room for Improvement* makes its point with pictures as much as with words. It costs 50p and can be ordered from King Edward's Hospital Fund for London, 14 Palace Court, London W2 4HT.

Another chairmobile

The first chairmobile to have been donated as a result of members collecting Green Shield stamps may have been in Bournemouth, as reported last month. But Gloucester joint branch aren't far behind. Its appeal for the 202,880 stamps required to purchase this battery-operated chair, designed by Lord Snowdon, was launched in September. Comments branch secretary Don Davis: 'We thought this project would keep us occupied in between times, now that the caravan holidays for old folk are nearly over, and before our Christmas parcel effort begins (this involves the collecting and distribution of some 1,500 parcels).'

PLAYSCHOOL IN A PIGSTY

Eric Hodges' concern for gypsies is well known–it was he who introduced the resolution pledging support for gypsies which was passed by the Central Council two years ago. It comes as no surprise, therefore, to learn that Eric was one of a team responsible for running a playschool for gypsy children this summer. The scheme, which had the backing of Swindon District, as well as of the North Wiltshire Gypsy Council, the Swindon Community Relations Council and other bodies, was for children living on a caravan site near Wootton Bassett.

The main problem was finding somewhere for the children to meet–and the unorthodox solution was to use an old pigsty on the site. Three weeks' hard work saw the manure removed, the walls whitewashed and electricity laid on. Activities included nature rambles, puppet shows, dancing and painting, as well as more serious subjects like reading and maths.

Next year they hope to tour sites in Wiltshire with a specially equipped caravan. Meanwhile they are pressing the Council for help in setting up a pre-school playgroup.

Extension in India

The latest issue of *The Lamp,* the magazine of Toc H India, to reach the editorial office reports the formation of a new group in Salem. The new group has come into being through the efforts of M C Dorai, former secretary of Coimbatore branch, who has moved to Salem. Following a series of meetings with a small group of Christian men and women who had expressed interest in Toc H he called a public meeting in March, which drew an attendance of about 50 people. The speakers included Dr S K David, chairman of Coimbatore branch, Ignatius D Asirvatham, secretary of Toc H India, and R D Paul, former Hon. Commissioner of Toc H India.

In brief...

●Welcome to Mrs Sue McWilliam, who has joined the headquarters staff at Wendover as Public Relations Assistant. Among many other things Sue will take over responsibility for advising branches and Districts on local exhibitions. And to Mrs Elsie Turner, who is responsible for operating the new printing machine at Wendover.

●A lot of people enjoyed a riotous evening at Melton Mowbray's Tramp Supper–and contributed £16 to cancer research at the same time.

●The latest issue of *Out and About,* the magazine of Toc H New Zealand, reports the remarkable all-round achievement of Toc H member Fred Creba at this year's Paraplegic Games. Fred won four medals in all. He came second in the shot put and in weightlifting, and third in the discus and the 110 metres wheelchair sprint.

●West Wales District entertained a group of United Nations Association workcamp members. A tour of the countryside was followed by an evening meal in Carmarthen.

●Coalville, Leics, member George Wood and his wife Kitty have recently had a visit from Willi Fechter, who was making his first visit to England since he was a POW here during the war. While a prisoner Willi attended several Coalville branch meetings–that was where he met George–and on one occasion accepted an invitation to take Light.

●Charles Wake is hoping for the usual good response to his appeal for used stamps, particularly stamps from overseas, this Christmas. The appeal, which started way back in 1930, raises funds for the Family Purse. Response to the appeal comes from as far afield as South Africa, where Queenstown branch contributes regularly. Send your stamps to Charles at Rockcliffe, 7 Leyburn Grove, Paignton, Devon TQ4 5JH.

●Still on the subject of stamps philatelists may like to know that Belgium will use a special post mark in November to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the burial of Belgium's Unknown Soldier.

●Organisers of balloon races be warned. Buckingham branch had a label returned from Vancouver, on the west coast of Canada. The reason? Not a freak wind over the Atlantic, but a hoax organised by the landlord of a local pub. Three balloons did, however, cross the Irish Sea.

●Cliff Cooper has retired from the Probation Service after 51 years' social work in the Courts. He received the MBE in recognition of his long service and has been made an Honorary Life Member of the National Association of Probation Officers. He joined Toc H in Lincoln in the 1920's and has been secretary of Worcester City branch for nearly 20 years.

●Ted Churchill was a Toc H Builder from 1952 until his death earlier this year. But his contribution was more than a financial one. Whenever Cardiff women's branch needed transport Ted and his car were at its disposal.

PICTUREPOINT

Photos: Rhyl and Prestatyn Gazette

The Toc H Holiday Centre at Rhyl in North Wales, as reported in our September issue, gave these boys from Belfast, 10 Catholics and 10 Protestants, a chance to get away from the tension for a week. The full costs of the week, including travel from Northern Ireland, were met by Rhyl North branch. 'The holiday was an unqualified success,' says Geoff Williams, secretary to the Holiday Centre. 'From arrival to departure we had no friction between the two religions.' The real value of the week lay in the opportunity to live a normal life away from the constant fear of bombs. Playing together and sharing camp chores the boys came to understand each other better. How long can that fragile understanding last?

GETTING ONESELF TOGETHER

Kathy Nairne, who has taken part in several Toc H projects, spent the summer of 1971 in New York as a Clayton Volunteer. She was the first Clayton to work at Project Return, a therapeutic community for ex-drug addicts. She writes here about the work of the community and the philosophy behind it.

When I arrived at Project Return on a hot July evening, feeling exhausted after my flight, the community was having a general meeting. All 60 of them were squashed into a small room on the third floor. I was taken in to be introduced by June, the Director; 'This is Kathy, from England', 'Hoorah . . . Hoorah . . . ' I was greeted by cheering and clapping. I felt overwhelmed and was conscious of a mass of black and white faces looking at me. Then I was taken to the little room, next to the girls' dormitory, where I was to sleep. It had two posters on the walls: one of Angela Davis in handcuffs with a halo round her head and one displaying 'Solidarity with the African American People'. Two of the girls stayed and chatted with me until I wanted to go to sleep, telling me about the activities of the community–about Encounters and Seminars and Morning Meetings. Next morning, when I came down to breakfast, there was a notice on the blackboard saying 'Welcome to the Family, Kathy'.

So I felt welcomed and accepted into the warmth and spontaneity of the community from the start. However, it was a long time before I began to understand what was going on and how I could contribute. A lot of the time I felt very inadequate, because I was supposed to be a staff member, but I didn't have the experience to do a staff member's job. The main things I could do were to make friends with people and join in whatever was going on.

Project Return is one of many therapeutic communities in New York which are developments from Synanon, the original therapeutic community for ex-drug addicts, which was started in California in 1959 by Chuck Dederich, himself an ex-alcoholic. The community is based on ideas of self-reliance and self-help, of learning to be honest and to accept one's own feelings, and on the belief that once a man accepts himself, he will continue to grow and develop his potentialities, while, as long as he does not accept himself, much of his energies will be wasted on self-justification. When someone joins Synanon he joins for life, because the members believe that they cannot live out their values of honesty and trust within the wider society but must create their own society. About five years ago, however, Phoenix House was started in New York, using the same concepts and methods as Synanon, but with the emphasis more on rehabilitation: that is, a person will spend a year or two in the community, go through a 're-entry phase' in which he gradually learns to live an ordinary life again and then leave if he wants to. Project Return was started two years ago by Julio Martinez and Carlos Pagan who had themselves been 'junkies' for many years and then were among the founder members of Phoenix House. Having graduated and become staff members at Phoenix House, they decided to start their own community.

Julio and Carlos feel very strongly about the need to get people off drugs, partly because they see it as a political question: they are both Puerto Ricans, and the majority of heroin addicts in New York have always been black or Puerto Rican. So it seems like a new form of slavery: the Government allows the profitable heroin traffic to go on, so that people in the poor areas are kept 'happy' by being 'high' all the time. For this reason, many people are also against methadone maintenance as a method of rehabilitation, because it can be used as an easy way to keep people quiet, and so avoid dealing with the basic problems of poverty, bad housing, prejudice and ignorance.

Looked at from this political perspective, the cause of the drug problem is the present state of society, producing pressures from which people want to escape. On the other hand, within the community, each individual is encouraged to see himself as responsible for his own actions: he chose to go on to drugs in the first place and can also choose to stay off them. He must 'get himself together' first, and then he will be better able to do something towards changing society.

Everybody in the community has a particular job, such as being on the kitchen crew who cook the meals, or the service crew who clean the house, or in the office doing typing and filing. Some people are 'expeditors' who rush around the house taking messages and noticing what everyone is doing, and others are 'co-ordinators' who organise everything that happens. The jobs are structured in a hierarchy so that some people have more responsibility than others, according to the stage they have reached in the programme. This helps to give them the motivation to do better so that they can feel they are getting on and working towards something they can attain.

One of the most important features of the community are the 'Encounters', where the structure is abandoned and everyone is encouraged to express his feelings as openly as possible in the group. This both provides an outlet for all the feelings arising from living so closely on top of each other–a sort of safety-valve for pent-up hostility–and is also a therapeutic tool, helping people to understand themselves better. This free expression of feelings made a great impression on me. It was amazing to see people shout when they felt angry, cry when they felt sad and give someone a hug when they felt warm towards them–so very different from the traditional British restraint.

Being at Project Return made me question many of my previous values and attitudes and I learnt a tremendous amount from the two months I spent there. One of the most important things for me was the idea that in order to change the world or society one must start with oneself. Although this is an idea that I had often heard before, it was really brought home to me by the people at Project Return. Because they had previously been heroin addicts they had had to change themselves drastically, and this seemed to give them great strength: the sort of strength which comes from facing up to what one is, both one's weaknesses and strengths, one's negative side as well as the positive. There is a lot of talk about freedom nowadays, but I now realise that freedom implies responsibility rather than permissiveness. It is only by taking full responsibility for myself that I can become free to be myself and not be dominated by other people's values and expectations, either through conformity or by rebellion.

I came away from Project Return feeling that basically I was much the same as everyone else there. There is really no such thing as drug addicts' problems, but only human problems. We all have different ways of escaping from our feelings, such as drinking, watching TV or sitting in libraries all day, and drug addiction is simply a particularly self-destructive way of doing so.

When I arrived back in England I got in touch with people here who are doing the same sort of thing, and I am now involved with a group who have started a therapeutic community called Second Chance Foundation in a farmhouse in Worcestershire. It is run on the same lines as Phoenix House and is for ex-addicts or anyone who wants help with emotional problems. Starting from this summer, I shall be spending a year there. This new community has been going for only a few months and is in need of help. Money is needed, for example, to buy a van, furniture, decorating equipment, and to pay for telephone and electricity. Also contacts are needed–with individuals or organisations who can refer to them people who might be suitable to join the community. Anyone wanting to offer help or requiring further information should write to: *Bryan James, Administrator, Second Chance Foundation, Adams Wood Farm, Upper Sapey, Worcester, Worcs.*

The Central Council of Toc H meets on November 4 and 5. Full reports of the discussions and decisions during this vitally important weekend will appear in the December issue of *Point Three*. Essential reading for every member of the Movement. Make sure your branch orders copies for every one of its members.

Also next month. The first of a new series of articles in which Keith Beck, Western Regional padre, discusses the meaning of the phrases of Toc H Prayer, phrases which have become so familiar that we have, perhaps, ceased to think about them.

Small Advertisements

Small advertisements must be received (with remittance) by the first day of the month preceding publication. The charge is 3p a word (minimum 30p). *Point Three* Magazine, Toc H Headquarters, 42 Crutched Friars, London EC3N 2AL. Telephone 01-709 0472.

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